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PREFACE: Jaclynn Tracy

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The transformation of programs preparing school leaders is nothing short of startling. In response to demands for strengthened preparation, educational leadership programs throughout the country embarked on a courageous journey to align college and university courses with national standards and to design student performance activities that would measure whether students could perform as school leaders. This authors of this book draw on their experience at one of the nation's largest leadership preparation programs, Eastern Michigan University. As often occurs in higher education the first steps to embrace performance activities were tenuous and begrudging. But as the work continued these faculty readily embraced a new pedagogy, became enthusiastic about the positive impact on students, and designed activities that both challenge students and significantly strengthen the instructional program. In each chapter the authors take a retrospective look at their experience and provide important insights into the improvement process. They offer a thoughtful critique of the changes in curriculum, instruction and assessment occurring in one program. Their learning offers important lessons to others embarking on this journey. I am proud to work with these courageous faculty and respect their commitment to continually improving their work with students. I am sure you will find this book helpful to your efforts.

Jaclynn Tracy, *Department Head Department of Leadership and Counseling Eastern Michigan University*

1. Performance is the New Standard in the Preparation of School Leaders; James Berry

The educational administration curriculum is being recast to emphasize academic as well as applied knowledge. Training for the applied nature of educational administration has been a challenge for most graduate programs as they emphasized the academic and theoretical approach to the leadership and administration of schools. The applied nature of educational administration has defined the field since its inception and the teaching of performance behaviors has become an integral component of the educational administration curriculum. The educational administration curriculum will, in the future, reflect this aspect of teaching and learning.



Note: This Collection has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and sanctioned by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of education administration. In addition to publication in the Connexions Content Commons, this Collection is published in the [International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation](#), Volume 4, Number 4 (October – December 2009). Formatted and edited in Connexions by Theodore Creighton, Virginia Tech.

Introduction

The field of educational leadership is going through a historical shift in the way school leaders are trained. There is recognition that complex educational organizations require a deep understanding and depth of knowledge about how to improve learning for leadership. Expecting prospective leaders to provide evidence of what they know through performance activities plays to the strength of programs in educational administration. In fact, the field itself is grounded in the applied nature of

being a practicing educator and school leader. In comparing the curriculum of educational administration from the last decade of the twentieth century to the first decade of the twenty-first the significant difference is in the return to the applied nature of the field reflected in performance activities required of students in their pre-service university training.

During the first decade of the 21st century programs in educational administration were professionally oriented (some would argue directed) and engaged in curricular reform through a process of accreditation that thrust a set of standards into the development of courses and content within the traditional educational administration curriculum. The Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC, 2002) standards (originally developed by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium and introduced 1996) have been used to focus programs in educational administration around expectations and outcomes that was a consensus of best practice and knowledge about preparing pre-service school leaders.

These standards were generally accepted as representing the broad themes of behavior, knowledge, and skill that were essential to leading and managing schools and other educational institutions. Debate raged about whether the standards were relevant and represented what the research and the literature in the field said about what educational leaders really needed to know and do (see for example, Hoyle, 2005; Murphy, 2005). Yet, regardless of one's position in this debate, most states adopted these standards to frame both the curriculum of university-based preparation programs in educational leadership and requirements for certification/licensure as a school leader.

The standards were also adopted, and occasionally adapted, by state departments of education as a framework for guiding state-wide accreditation. The ISLLC/ELCC standards have become the "coin of the realm" for defining expectations of educational leadership programs across the United States. At last count the ISLLC/ELCC standards were wholly adopted or served as source documents for 43 states approving educational leadership programs through a state approved accreditation process (Shipman, Queen, & Peel, 2007). The ELCC Specialty Program Area (SPA) standards contain student expectations that reflect academic knowledge of

educational administration as well as performance expectations requiring student participation in meaningful activities that are evaluated and assessed.

The standards require a set of performance activities for all students approved by NCATE/ELCC. These activities, however, are more than paper and pencil activities. Performance means a student is investigating a topic, demonstrating a skill, or doing an exhibition. They might require written or oral responses that are included in a portfolio or journal that incorporates all of the performance activities.

Musical or athletic performances have been the standard for activities that require demanding practice at a high level of skill. The renowned Juilliard School of Music explains the importance of student performance in seeking excellence:

Performance is an essential component of the learning process at The Juilliard School. More than 700 drama, dance, and music events take place in the Juilliard building during the school year. They present individuals and ensembles whose teachers have nurtured, shaped, and readied them for the moment when they step on stage, the moment when all their training and preparation come into focus and the energy they give comes back to them in the appreciation of an audience. (Juilliard School, 2008, p. X)

Under the guidelines established for educational leadership programs seeking Educational leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) accreditation through the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), performance means that a student must accomplish some kind of meaningful task that teaches or reflects a skill that a school administrator might perform in day-to-day work.

This performance expectation does not diminish the importance of content knowledge required to explain the task or understand how one thinks through an activity. Performance, in context to meeting standards, means educational leadership programs must expect students to demonstrate the

applied nature of their knowledge in order to show that they both *know* and can *do* the job of school administrator.

Pre-Service University Preparation

Aligning a curriculum with the ELCC standards has impacted university-based preparation programs. The renewed focus on learning-by-doing has emerged as central to the preparation of educational leaders. The emphasis on practice that was fondly referred to as *war stories* told by former school administrators who had been hired as university faculty—has now come full circle. The renewed focus on assuring that students not only *know* but can *do* has meant curricula must be developed that increasingly emphasizes skills and behaviors that will transfer to the applied aspects of administration and leadership.

Performance assessment can be defined in several ways—as actual demonstrations that show learning has occurred, as results-based assessment, as task performances that reflect real-life situations, as the production of a product or performance that reflects program objectives, and so on. It is most useful when focusing on broad professional tasks rather than on a single sub-skill. Performance assessment may include aggregated evaluations or random samplings of candidate and/or professor portfolios, rubrics of projects and investigations, candidate program evaluations, interviews, documented observations of simulations or clinical experiences, peer assessments, job performance of graduates, and so on.

Another characteristic of performance assessment is the use of higher-order thinking skills (e.g., analysis, synthesis, evaluation) by candidates. Integration of performance assessment with the instructional process allows assessors and candidates to interact to strengthen learning.

Performance assessments are:

- Essential, not arbitrary or contrived to shake out a grade.
- Enabling, constructed to point the candidate toward more sophisticated use of skills or knowledge.

- Contextualized complex intellectual challenges, not atomized tasks corresponding to isolated actions.
- Representative challenges designed to emphasize depth more than breadth.
- Engaging and educational.
- Involved with broad tasks or problems that may be somewhat ambiguous. (NPBEA Standards, 2002, p. 12)

The shift in preparation of educational leaders reflects earlier debate about the focus on such preparation. The field of educational leadership has always been grounded in the applied nature of leadership. Today, however, there is growing emphasis on learning the applied skills and behaviors of school administration—as it was during the early formative stage of development of educational administration in the twentieth century—for constructing knowledge about educational leadership.

Knowledge and Performance

In the early 1950s educational administration moved away from the applied nature of the field and embraced the university-based academic, scientific, rational, and theoretical approach to training school administrators. Griffiths (1959), especially, believed that the field of educational administration should be elevated to the status of other academic fields within the university. The way to do this was to turn the curriculum into a more academic oriented approach to training school administrators. Perhaps the best example of the field's desire to achieve a higher status within the academy was the founding of the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) as a professional organization for those preparation programs emphasizing the academic, scholarly, and research orientation of the field. Prior to the founding of UCEA in 1956 the field of educational administration was represented by the National Council for Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA). The very nature of UCEA's existence was based upon a belief by select universities that the field must establish a more scholarly, research, and academic curriculum to prepare school administrators.

University pre-service preparation to be a school administrator then became a graduate level exercise that mirrored the movement of the curriculum toward a more theoretical and academic approach that emphasized the cognitive knowledge related to the practice of school administration. Professors and university programs moved with the times to satisfy a perceived need to fit within the academy and to offer a more substantive academic curriculum to address the weaknesses of the prescriptive era of the previous fifty years (Murphy, 1992, p. 41). The thirty-four university programs in educational administration that became UCEA founding members were taking on the challenge to “improve graduate programs in educational administration through the stimulation and coordination of research, the publication and distribution of literature growing out of research and training activities, and the exchange of ideas” (Campbell, et al, 1987, p. 182).

For the past fifty years the field of educational leadership treated the applied nature of school administration as the handmaiden to the academic orientation that the field embraced during the 1950’s. Although the profession recognized the importance of the hands-on aspect of educational leadership, it also denigrated the stories, anecdotal experiences, and front line encounters of ex- administrators as colorful commentary and historical footnotes with little academic value within the higher education academy.

Thus, aspiring educational leaders memorized theories and learned the cognitive and scientific approach to leadership without an intentional or thoughtfully constructed experience that applied learning or required performance to complete, enhance, and complement well-constructed lectures that described and theorized about actual leadership within a school or school district.

An emphasis on academic learning at the expense of experiential learning contributed to the criticism of school leadership preparation. An invigorated focus on student learning and accountability for student performance led schools and districts to seek leaders who not only knew what to do but how to perform in demanding positions that required affective, behavioral, and hands-on skill.

Student Performance

After fifty years of diminished credibility of a curriculum devoted to the applied nature of school administration, the field has once again embraced performance and experience . . . within an accepted academic epistemology. The problem-based, experiential, constructivist, and student-centered forms of pedagogy that place more of the responsibility for learning on the learner have been embraced as important curricular components within the educational leadership curriculum. The field of educational leadership entered a period in which it recognized the applied nature of the profession and used a broader definition of learning to complement academic with applied learning. This perspective, with ties to the intellectual work of Dewey (1959), Lewin (1951), Piaget (1958), Rogers (1969), Vygotsky (see Daniels, 2001), Lave & Wenger (1991), Kolb (1984) and others emphasizes “the central role that experience plays in the learning area” (Kolb, 1984, p. 20).

The profession is now in the process of re-balancing rational, theoretical, and scientific with performance, activity, and experience. The problem-based, experiential, performance approach extends, refines, and reconnects the applied educational administration curriculum to the academic curriculum that arose in the 1950’s. The applied nature of the field is being reinforced by standards that have performance expectations and requirements.

To imbue the educational administration curriculum with meaningful performance activities that replicate day-to-day experience is an attempt to reconnect the professional and theory based aspects of educational administration to its more practical and applied elements of managing and leading an educational organization. The adaptation of performance and experiential learning into the educational administration curriculum is returning to the very practical knowledge of *what to do* and *how to do it* and recognizes the importance of merging applied knowledge with the academic training within educational leadership preparation.

Experience and knowledge together draw the learner toward a deeper level of learning and understanding that results in a personal change. As Dewey

(1912) noted:

Experience as trying involves change, but change is meaningless transition unless it is consciously connected with the return wave of consequences which flow from it. When an activity is continued *into* the undergoing of consequences, when the change made by action is reflected back in a change made in us, the mere flux is loaded with significance. We learn something. (Dewey, 1912, p. 163)

Kolb (1984) viewed learning as a complex process that required “immediate concrete experience” . . . or the “indirect comprehension of symbolic representation of experience” (p. 58). Importantly, he considered learning, which led to new understanding as “the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience” (p. 38). The transformation of experience, he theorized, was representative of a process that involved a series of psychological events that required reflection and thought that then led to new understanding or learning. These phases of learning are the experiential learning cycle and include: experiencing, publishing, processing, generalizing, and applying as represented in Figure 1 (adapted from Walter & Marks, 1981).

What makes experiential learning so relevant for the field of educational leadership is its emphasis on practicing applied knowledge by engaging in a process of thinking that results in behavior change while progressing through an academically rigorous curriculum. The premise behind experiential learning is that, “Ideas are not fixed and immutable elements of thought but are formed and re-formed through experience” (Kolb, 1984, p. 26). With the advent of ISLLC/ELCC standards, and the commitment to performance learning that is an integrated component of the educational administration curriculum, the field has re-established the importance of applied knowledge. The field has re-established its roots as an applied profession.

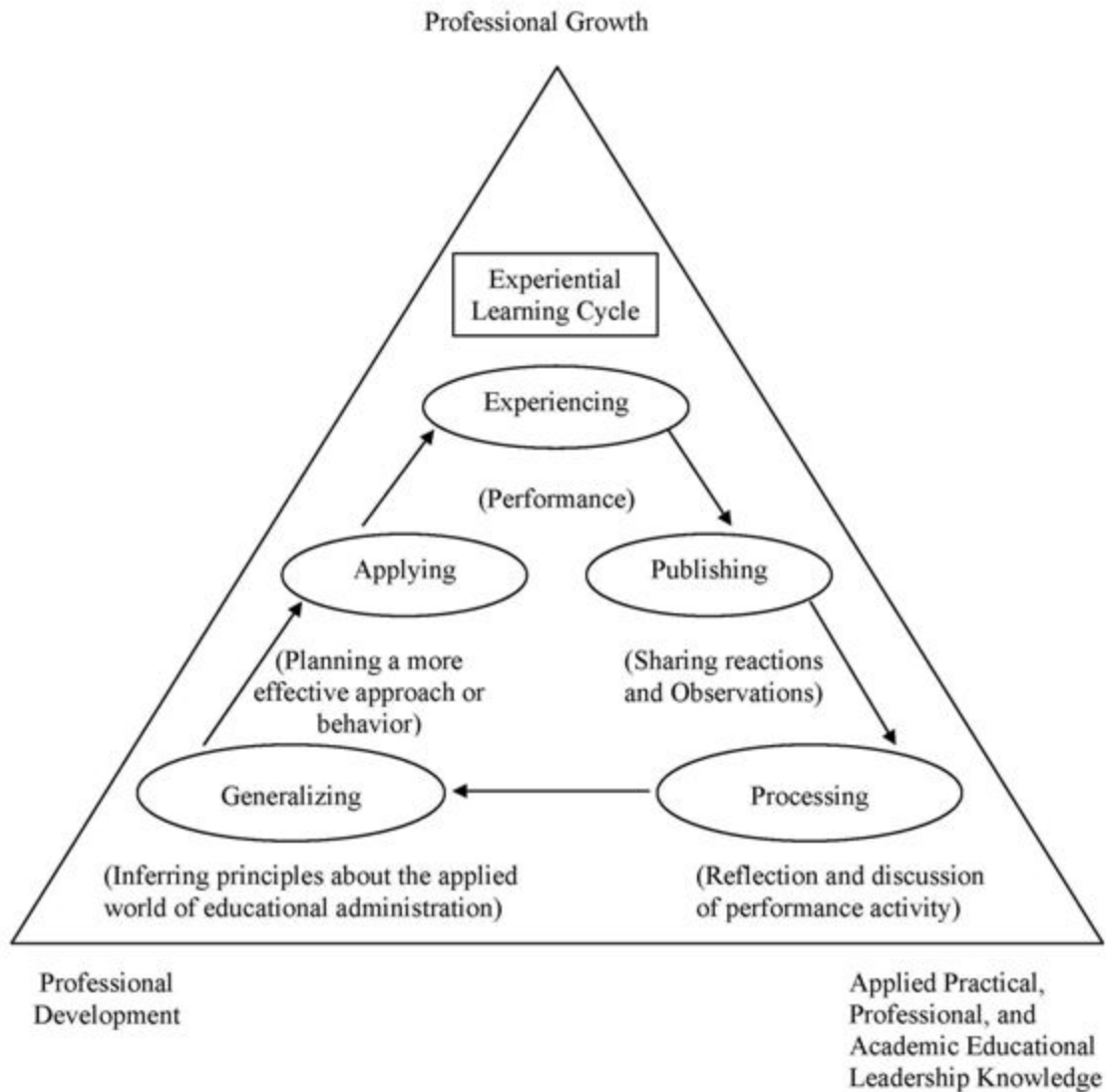
The context for experiential learning in the educational leadership curriculum is to develop a deeper level of understanding by being involved in well crafted activities and problems that elicit behaviors and reflections

commensurate with roles and responsibilities that are closely aligned with the job of school administrator within a community of practice. Lave and Wenger (1991) describe the importance of acquiring knowledge as an apprentice (guided by an involvement with a structured pattern of learning experiences) within this community of practice.

A learning curriculum is situated. It is not something that can be considered in isolation, manipulated in arbitrary didactic terms, or analyzed apart from the social relations that shape legitimate peripheral participation. (p. 97)

Figure 1: Experiential Learning Cycle

Figure 1



Adapted from:

Walter, G. A. & Marks, S. E. (1981). *Experiential learning and change*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

The curriculum of the educational leadership program, after fifty years of academic emphasis is being more closely aligned with applied learning that expects graduates of an educational leadership program to have a command of meaningful skills that can be transferred to leadership roles and responsibilities in education. Significantly, there is the recognized importance of imparting knowledge through well-crafted and meaningful

activities that are as challenging and significant as academic work within the classroom. Vygotsky (see Daniels, 2001) further explained how these well-crafted activities could build on previous learning and scaffold into new learning. However, the construction of new learning was not an independent cognitive activity. As Vygotsky and others have written, the social and cultural context in which the student interacts helps to reinforce the more complete understanding of the performance activity within the educational context.

The field of educational leadership preparation is embracing the more thorough education of the aspiring school administrator by challenging him/her to learn . . . using the both the left (more cognitive) and right side (more conceptual) of the brain.

A Change in Curriculum Delivery

Berry and Beach (2006) wrote that the field of educational leadership had practical, professional, and academic domains that served as a foundation for curriculum planning within educational administration programs (Table 1). Educational leadership is a complex, diverse, and amorphous field that, ultimately, draws from many professions. The applied nature of educational leadership is substantively represented by a complex intersection of practical, professional, and academic knowledge—from dealing with an angry parent to making a presentation to the school board about student achievement—that demands a high level of performance in one’s day-to-day role within an educational organization.

practical	professional	academic
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Educational Leadership Domains

(Berry & Beach, 2005)

- Each domain represents a body of knowledge within the educational administration curriculum. Your first item here
- Educational administration preparation programs have struggled to determine the appropriate balance between each knowledge domain.

Achilles and DuVall (1991) described the typical educational leadership program in the late twentieth century as focused on a limited knowledge base that emphasized just two areas. The first area was in the social sciences and included grounding in economics, geography, history, political science, psychology, social studies, and sociology. According to Achilles and Duvall, “This has led to a pseudo-scientific aura that surrounds course content, research methodology, and academic perspective” (p. 16). A knowledge base in educational administration, they suggested, should be framed around two distinct learning areas to have credibility and integrity. The social science area was basic to the profession and depended upon the “theoretical underpinnings that relates concepts and ideas, helps predict behaviors, and at least partially explains phenomena” (p. 16). The emphasis on obtaining knowledge within the social sciences was, as they pointed out, a necessary component of the educational administration curriculum. This area has been the primary focus of learning for the field over the last fifty years.

The second area, however, requires knowledge of self and performance. How well does the principal, superintendent, or other educational leader perform in the position? This is the area that had been neglected by the field as it embraced the rational scientific method. “The application of concepts requires the processing of real time feedback. It requires continuous adjustment, assessment of phenomena, and alteration of courses of action. Performance requires the practitioner to be ‘scholar on one’s feet’” (Achilles & Duvall, 1991, p. 16).

A shortcoming of the typical program in educational leadership at the end of the twentieth century was its focus on the pseudo-scientific rather than the practice of leadership. Students were expected to learn from a curriculum that emphasized theory over practice and measured success by the student’s ability to transfer knowledge through memorization of material from a lecture that described a prescribed practice.

Performance Activities

A performance activity requires an active behavior by the student. Being an active participant is key to the learning performance. An active performance similar to the one described below offers insight into how structuring student behavior through a meaningful activity shapes student learning.

A Theory for Leading: Distributed Leadership

Activity #1: Evaluating Consensus Decision-Making

Each student will observe a district level team that is focused on an aspect of instructional improvement and complete a consensus protocol based upon team/committee performance. The consensus protocol will be used to observe individual leadership behavior in a group.

Reading: Before observing the team/committee for this assignment read:

- Spillane, J. P., Halverson, R. and Diamond, J. B. (2004). Towards a theory of leadership practice: a distributed perspective, *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 36(1) 3–34.
- Berry, J. E. (2005, Winter). Professional leadership accountability: Evaluating the work of educational teams, *Education Leadership Review*, 6(1), 9-14.

The student must have a prior working knowledge of consensus to complete this assignment.

1. The student must have a working definition of consensus roles of behavior to determine the patterns of behavior within the group.
2. The student must have an understanding of how consensus is used in making group decisions.

Performance Requirements:

1. The student will submit a written analysis that describes consensus roles and behaviors that were observed during the meeting. Identify strengths and areas of concern for this team. A tabulation of consensus behaviors will be aggregated and submitted in chart form indicating observed behaviors: (a) raw score and (b) total percentage.
2. The student will debrief the team on its observed performance: focus on Task and Maintenance functions only. Include a summary of debriefing as part of the written analysis.
3. The student will write a growth plan that targets improvement in consensus decision making for the committee/team observed.

Activity #2: Facilitating Distributed Leadership

Utilizing the knowledge gained from the previous observing consensus assignment the student will facilitate a group or team meeting utilizing the skills of consensus. The student will handle all aspects of organizing and leading a consensus group.

Organizational and Meeting Requirements: Utilize consensus decision-making as the method for organizing and leading a meeting devoted to an aspect of education. The book *Rules for Reaching Consensus* is a source book for learning the details, guidelines, and rules of consensus:

Saint, S. and Lawson, J. R. (1994). *Rules for reaching consensus*. San Diego: Pfeffer & Company.

Requirements:

1. The student will utilize another student from this class or train a member of the team to evaluate the student/facilitator's consensus behavior in leading a team.) The student will submit a written analysis (including the tabulation matrix with percentage scores tabulated) that describes the consensus roles and behaviors observed during the meeting for the student/facilitator.

2. The observer will debrief the facilitator on the facilitator's overall observed performance: focus on Task and Maintenance functions only. Include a summary of the debriefing as part of the written analysis.
3. The student will write a growth plan that targets improvement in the facilitation of consensus decision-making teams per the feedback obtained from the debriefing.

[Click Here to Access Task, Maintenance, and Anti-Group Functions Tabulation Matrix](#)

The educational team has become a fixture in K-12 education as an integral component of decision-making. In this performance assessment students learn the skills of decision-making in the context of the theory of distributed leadership. Each student will evaluate a decision making team utilizing an evaluative model for observing consensus behavior. The student is required to attend two educational meetings in a school district to assess professional behavior associated with the process of team decision-making. Within this requirement the student observes leadership behavior, analyzes it within the context of the culture of the organization, and reflects upon what has been observed. The student is then expected to perform as a facilitator of the observed group and critique his/her own performance as a leader.

The knowledge, skill, and behavior required to perform this activity represents a dramatic shift for the systematic training of educational leaders away from the lecture/discussion classroom that characterized educational leadership training for most university programs during the last half of the twentieth century. It doesn't diminish the importance of knowledge about distributed leadership, but extends this knowledge to an activity that requires an engaged student performing and applying the new learning about distributed leadership in a meaningful way.

Conclusion

Ironically, the argument emerged in the 1940's that educational leadership preparation was too practitioner oriented. Too many university professors were hired out of K-12 administrative positions and then developed

programs oriented around the applied nature of educational leadership. These professors had little trouble distinguishing the importance of an applied curriculum over an academic curriculum. The academic work was about applied practice and the day-to-day running of a school and school district.

The problem with the training of educational leaders, according to practitioners, was that preparation shifted too far in the direction of academic learning during the last half of the twentieth century. The academic culture of the university supported and promoted this orientation to the point of making some programs of educational leadership preparation irrelevant to the practice of school administration in K-12 schools and school districts.

Acquisition of performance ability has again become a recognized expectation to insure that what principals know and can do transfers to the real world of schooling. University preparation is once again connecting academic knowledge to the applied day-to-day responsibility of being a school principal or front line administrator. The match between what professors know and can teach is adding academic and practical value to what principals and superintendents need to know and do for performing their jobs on a day-to-day basis.

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2. Staging the Performance: The Challenge of Authenticity in Educational Leadership Performance Assessment; David Anderson

This chapter focuses on the unique challenges of performance assessment in the field of educational leadership. In Teacher Preparation programs, authentic assessment is challenging but doable. If you want to know if someone can teach, you should not ask them to write an essay about what lesson they would create given a set of materials and learning objectives. You should actually give them the materials, have them teach, and assess that performance. In Educational Leadership, true performance assessment is much more challenging. If we want to know if someone can lead, it is difficult to find a situation where she/he can lead and then have trained assessors evaluate her/his performance in that situation. And what products could be captured from that performance? This chapter addresses these challenges by outlining four interconnected phases for developing a performance assessment, involving twelve steps: Design (prioritizing the skill domain, choosing an assessment activity, choosing a product from that activity, brainstorming the characteristics of a good product, formulating those characteristics into a rubric, and setting benchmarks for the rubric), evaluation (piloting the assessment, and applying the rubric to a small number of students), implementation (training assessors, and applying the rubric to all students), and program development (evaluating the results, and returning to step #1). A specific example of these steps is provided, and the role of performance assessment in reconsidering the domain of knowledge/skills/dispositions for educational leadership is discussed.

Note: This module has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and sanctioned by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of education administration. In addition to publication in the Connexions Content Commons, this module is published in the [International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation](#), Volume 4, Number 4 (October – December 2009). Formatted and edited in Connexions by Theodore Creighton, Virginia Tech.

Introduction

Concerns around the quality of public education have always been a part of the history of the US, but they have been intensifying over the past couple of decades. With these concerns, the demands for accountability have grown: first in K-12 and now in post-secondary education (Fritschler et. al., 2008). Accountability refers to reviewing the quality of educational programs and holding them to standards of quality through a series of sanctions and/or rewards.

Appropriately, the quality standards that drive accountability in education have been grounded in student learning. So, across all the academic and professional fields, there has been a tremendous amount of work defining what students should know and be able to do. In the field of Educational leadership, this domain of knowledge and skills is encapsulated by the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) standards (Wilmore, 2002).

The move to program accountability in education has shifted from a focus on standards (what students should know and be able to do) to a focus on the challenges of implementing performance activities that can be assessed to show student program in meeting standards. In professional training programs, these assessment challenges are significant. In order to understand why, let's examine the challenges of assessment more closely.

The Challenge of Assessment: Assessing Performance

In professional fields in higher education, where practitioner training is the focus, the emphasis (quite appropriately) is more on the *able to do* than on the *to know*. Knowledge is important, but for someone training for a specific professional role, applying that knowledge is particularly important.

Educators have a long history of assessing knowledge, but a relatively short history of assessing the application of knowledge. Knowledge assessment has traditionally been done through paper and pencil tests, preferably through standardized multiple choice tests if the results of these tests will be

used for high stakes decisions, such as accountability decisions (Stiggins, 1994). The field of psychometrics has constructed an impressive and sophisticated array of theories and tools to develop valid and reliable assessments of knowledge, including the so-called higher-order thinking skills (Linn et al., 1991).

Assessing application of knowledge has been far murkier. This area is known as performance assessment. Performance assessment gets its name from the belief that, if a faculty member wants to measure how well a student applies core knowledge, the student needs to actually apply that knowledge in a performance activity, and the faculty member needs to capture that performance and evaluate it.

Learning to drive can serve as an example. The goal of a good driver's education class is to produce competent drivers. This involves helping student drivers master a body of knowledge (how to operate a car, rules of the road, etc.) as well as actually applying that knowledge to successfully drive a car. If the instructor wants to assess a student driver's competence, she would give two types of assessment: a knowledge assessment (How well does the student driver understand the rules of the road?) and a performance assessment (How well can the student driver actually drive a car?). These two types of assessment complement each other because a traditional knowledge test can adequately sample across a broad domain of issues (which is impossible to address in an actual driving test), whereas a driving test can clearly indicate whether the student can actually drive.

The challenge is that any high-stakes assessment, including performance assessment, must meet certain quality characteristics. These characteristics are often called the APPLE criteria: Administratively feasible, Professionally credible, Publicly acceptable, Legally defensible, and Economically affordable (Nyirenda, 1994). These criteria are typically applied to large scale high stakes assessments, but there are equivalent quality characteristics for classroom level assessments: 1) Purpose and Impact (How will the assessment be used and how will it impact instruction and the selection of curriculum?); 2) Validity/Authenticity (Does it measure what it intends to measure? Does it allow students to demonstrate both what they know and are able to do?); 3) Fairness (Is the assessment biased

towards any group of students?); 4) Reliability (Does the assessment measure skills consistently regardless of situation and/or assessor?); 5) Significance (Does the assessment address content and skills that are valued by and reflect current thinking in the field?); and 6) Efficiency (Is the assessment reasonably easy and cost effective to complete and score?).

In order to address these quality characteristics, assessment developers typically follow a set of steps (Herman et. al., 1992; Stiggins, 1994). There are four interconnected phases for developing a performance assessment, involving twelve steps:

Phase 1: Design

This initial phase involves identifying the knowledge and skills that a student should possess and developing a set of activities or products that provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate their mastery. The following steps are included in this phase:

- 1) List and prioritize the knowledge, skills, and dispositions from the curriculum. (Standards)
- 2) Choose an activity that will allow students to demonstrate mastery of each set of knowledge, skills, or dispositions. (Assessment Activity)
- 3) Choose a product that captures this activity (an essay, a video, artifacts that identify the assessment object)
- 4) Brainstorm characteristics of a good product. (Assessment Criteria)
- 5) Formulate those characteristics into a rubric, including both holistic and analytic rubrics. (Rubric formation) Typically, assessment developers will brainstorm characteristics of a performance that hits the target, one that misses the target (since missing the target is not necessarily just the absence of the hit the target behaviors), and one that reflects developmental behaviors in between. This provides a three level rubric—a five level rubric can simply allow the assessor to place performances between the levels. In

any case, any number of levels can be developed through a brainstorming session.

6) Set benchmarks for assessment—what is adequate for program accountability purposes? (Setting Performance Standards)

Phase 2:Evaluation

During this phase designers use the performance assessment with students in order to determine whether the activity appropriately measures the knowledge and skills identified earlier. Two additional steps are included.

7) Pilot the performance assessment with some students.

8) Evaluate student work, using the rubric. Choose a set of student work samples that illustrate each level of each rubric. (Identifying Anchor performances) These anchor performances, along with the rubric, are invaluable tools for students to understand the target they are expected to hit.

Phase 3:Implementation

The third phase focuses on implementing the performance assessment. Assessors are trained and the scoring rubric broadly used to assess student work. Two steps are included in this phase.

9) Train assessors using the anchor performances to ensure inter-rater reliability;

10) Apply the rubric to all appropriate students.

Phase 4:Program Development

This final phase involves examining data about the assessment to identify patterns that may indicate issues of fairness in implementation. It also includes examining again whether the performance activity appropriately measures the knowledge and skills identified in Phase 1. Two final steps are included in this phase.

11) Examine the results—look for patterns in the results. Are there achievement gaps between males and females? Between minority and majority students? If so, there may be an issue of fairness in an assessment. Re-evaluate the assessment in light of any achievement gaps, and modify accordingly.

12) Return to the original standard. Do the performances give any new insight into the appropriateness and significance of the standard and how it is worded? (Feedback loop between Standards and Assessments)

A Common Misconception: An Essay is a Performance Assessment

Many of the earliest forms of high-stakes performance assessments (that met the criteria listed above) were in the area of writing (Weigle, 2002). The problem with this history is that many educators continue to confuse written essays with performance assessments. A written essay is only a performance assessment product in two cases: 1) if it is an assessment of writing; or 2) if it is capturing an actual performance in written form. Many so-called performance assessments are neither.

In the field of professional educator training, a classic approach to performance assessment is the infamous in-box activity. In this approach, a student is given a case scenario (with various hypothetical artifacts at his disposal and a pressing problem facing him) and asked how he would address this situation given the constraints and tools available. He then writes an essay describing a response to this situation, and must support his response with references to theoretical frameworks provided in the course. This is a fine learning activity, but it does not constitute a performance assessment in the truest sense.

To illustrate why, we can return to our driver's education example. The in-box activity is the equivalent of asking students to imagine that they are at a four-way stop where they are one of three cars that reached the intersection at the same time: what will they do? Although answering this question correctly (with reference to the appropriate driving rule) is valuable, it is not a substitute for actually watching a student reach a four way stop in that situation. Why? Because applying knowledge in a real situation is always more complex than such a simplified scenario allows. Even if a student understands the four-way stop rule, will she/he correctly process the information that occurs in the real situation? Will she/he correctly observe all the cars as they approach the intersection and focus about the timing? Will she/he be distracted by additional (unforeseen) factors, such as the pedestrian trying to cross the road, or the car riding close behind the rear bumper? Applying knowledge in the context of real situations is the essence of true performance assessment.

Authenticity is the Key Challenge

In teacher preparation programs, authentic assessment is challenging but doable (Doherty et al., 2002). If an administrator wants to know if someone can teach, he should not ask that person to write an essay about what lesson to create, given a set of materials and learning objectives. The administrator should actually give the teacher a set of materials, have him teach, and assess that performance.

However, there are numerous practical problems with performance assessment in teacher preparation programs. It is often impractical for education professors to observe all of their students teaching in actual school environments. (This can be done by student-teaching supervisors and mentors, but not by each professor in every class). Besides, research has shown that direct observation (using a checklist or rubric) is often not the most valid and reliable method of evaluation.

So, the solution is to capture the performance in a set of products: a videotape, a written analysis, and samples of student work (or other artifacts from the actual performance). These can then be evaluated. Research has shown that evaluation of a set of products often has more validity and

reliability than direct observation (because of the ability of the assessor to carefully review and reflect on the products, which is impossible to do in real time).

In educational leadership, true performance assessment is much more challenging. If leadership programs want to know if someone can lead, it is difficult to create and/or find a situation where she/he can lead and then have trained assessors evaluate her/his performance in that situation. And what products could be captured from that performance?

The Quasi Performance Assessment: Staging

In educational leadership, the challenge is to create staged situations where adequately appropriate performances can be attained. So, what are the strategies for staging?

One approach is to create an activity that requires the student to take a leadership role and actually perform leadership responsibilities, even if the activity is not embedded directly in the core activities of the school or district. For example, any activity that requires consensus building could demonstrate leadership skills.

Another approach is to have a student participate in an authentic activity by helping the actual school leader perform this activity. This would provide limited performance opportunities, but it would allow the student to experience and critically analyze actual performances in a very focused and intimate fashion.

An Example: Designing a Performance Assessment in Educational Leadership

Let's return to the twelve steps and apply them to one hypothetical example in an educational leadership curriculum. This will be a fairly simple example for the purpose of illustration.

Step 1: Although ELCC has identified the domain of knowledge and skills required of a practitioner, every program must prioritize these standards and

decide where and how often they will assess each standard. In the program at Leadership University, the faculty put a great deal of emphasis on participative, democratic leadership. A key part of this is consensus building. So, the faculty designates two faculty members (who teach a course that incorporates consensus-building) to create a performance assessment that addresses consensus building which is considered a central part of a specific ELCC standard. The faculty members decide to define consensus-building (the knowledge, skills, and dispositions) using a framework that identifies the various behavior types often seen in group dynamics as well as techniques for bringing these types together into consensus.

Step 2: The two faculty developers decide on an appropriate activity: they will ask each student to find a meeting in their organization where an important, but controversial, item will be discussed. They will then ask each student to approach the normal facilitator of the group, and ask if she/he could first observe an initial discussion around the topic, and then facilitate a consensus-building dialogue around this item. Next, the developers will ask each student to observe the beginning discussion using an observation tool that captures the behavior types of each participant at the meeting. Then, based on this observation tool, the student would (at least try to) apply the appropriate consensus-building techniques. Satisfied with this activity, the faculty developers write descriptions and directions for the students. Note: This is an authentic task because each student is actually using the consensus-building techniques in a real situation. It is somewhat staged because the meeting participants will realize that this is a student assignment, and this might affect the authenticity of their engagement in the process. Also, consensus building often requires numerous discussions, but this on-going process is not reflected in the assignment.

Step 3: It is decided that students will submit their observation sheets, as well as essays documenting the techniques they used, the effects of those techniques, and recommendations for further consensus-building activities. Each essay would be reviewed by one of the other participants from each student's meeting for accuracy and completeness.

Step 4: Given the consensus-building framework, the faculty decide that the observation sheet should identify a range of behavior patterns across multiple participants in the meeting. The essay should address multiple techniques by clearly identifying each technique and how it was used in the discussion, as well as analyzing strengths and weaknesses.

Step 5: Then, the faculty visualize an exemplary student performance and brainstorm descriptors of that performance, including the number of behaviors and techniques integrated into the performance and analysis. Next, they visualize a performance that misses the target for a variety of reasons, and they brainstorm descriptors of that performance. Finally, they imagine a performance in the middle and brainstorm appropriate descriptors at that level. In all three cases, these descriptors include adjectives that capture a sense of quality, not just quantity of the behaviors and techniques. The faculty members notice that the descriptors fall into two broad categories: observation and analysis of behaviors, and selection and analysis of techniques. They split the descriptors into these two groups to create two analytic rubrics.

Step 6: The faculty decide that the middle levels of each analytic rubric demonstrate an adequate mastery of the skills to meet the ELCC standard. The top levels go beyond the expectations of the ELCC standard, and give room for further growth for the more advanced students completing the performance. They create a table that captures the three levels of both analytic rubrics, including all the descriptors.

Step 7: The faculty decide on an appropriate instructional activity which will help students prepare for this assessment: a simulation in small groups. They then pilot the instructional activity and assessment in one section of the course. They decide that, even though the assessment may not yet meet the rigorous standards for external accountability (e.g., the APPLE criteria), the design process to this point ensures that it meets their standards for supporting high quality teaching and learning. In other words, it will be a good learning experience for the students, and the instructor of this pilot course will be able to grade the assessment in a fair and appropriate manner. Since the assessment is part of the students' grades, the students in the pilot will give the assessment appropriate effort. (Note: If the assessment is used

this way in the piloting, it should be used this way in the actual implementation for validity and reliability purposes.)

Step 8: Next, the faculty developers choose samples of student work and assess each student individually. Then they meet and grade the samples and discuss/resolve any differences in assessment, until they have identified at least two examples of student work at each level for both rubrics. These are the anchor papers.

Step 9: The two faculty members arrange a meeting for all of the faculty who teach this particular course (and a few other interested faculty). At this meeting, the two faculty developers distribute the description and directions for completing the activity (which was given to students) as well as the rubric (which was also given to the pilot students). Next, the two developers share half the samples of student work, and ask each faculty member to individually assess the samples with the rubric. Then, as a group, the faculty discuss their assessments until they agree on what each sample should receive. Then, the faculty members distribute the second half of the samples, to check and make sure that there is consistency among all the assessors. Any re-categorization of anchor papers is discussed and resolved.

Step 10: All faculty members (both full and part-time) who teach sections of the course integrate the assessment into their sections. The faculty are given freedom in deciding how to incorporate the assessment into their grading practices.

Step 11: After a year of giving the assessments, the faculty sit down and examine the results. They notice that students working in urban environments are getting consistently lower scores. In examining samples of student work, they realize that these students are dealing with much larger groups and are trying to evaluate, in depth, more individuals. The faculty decide to change the directions by asking students to focus on specific influential participants to do their analysis. This helps with the validity of the assessment since it reflects appropriate consensus-building skills. They also notice that one adjunct professor gives consistently higher scores. So, they sit down with this instructor and assess samples of student work together. During the subsequent discussion, they identify a

misunderstanding on the part of the instructor as to the definition of one behavior and associated technique.

Step 12: Having done this assessment in many sections, they convene another meeting of all the instructors who have given the assessment. At this meeting, the instructors indicate that consensus building needs to be tied to group communication skills, and they suggest a slightly different framework that incorporates both areas. With this new definition, they return to step 2 and make appropriate modifications.

Clearly, these steps reflect an ongoing process. One difficulty is that as rubrics change, it is difficult to examine longitudinal data. However, faculty can balance the need for revision with the need for longitudinal analysis as they see fit.

The Final Solution: A Portfolio of Assessments

In order for comprehensive accountability, multiple types of assessments are needed: performance assessments, knowledge assessments, and hybrid assessments. A program also needs to assess a broad domain of standards (knowledge, skills, and dispositions), and try to assess each of these characteristics through multiple assessments. But how is this done?

The best approach is to create a programmatic portfolio with course-embedded assessments. This requires horizontal and vertical articulation (scope and sequence) across the courses in the entire program. Portfolios are most valuable when the course embedded assessments can reveal a student's progress (or lack thereof) over time. To achieve this, the assessments can be created in a way that reflects skill building over time (Koretz et al, 1993; Calfee et. al., 1996; Cummings et al., 2008).

Yet, this is difficult in the field of educational leadership, since most programs cannot afford to use a cohort model where courses are taken in a particular sequence. Practitioners need the flexibility to take courses in any order, given the need to balance both personal and professional roles. However, well-designed performance assessments demand thick description and rich analysis from students. These in-depth student work samples can

still reflect student growth if assessors add written comments that pinpoint individual student needs, and subsequent assessors check on these needs.

The Future: Learning From the 12th Step—the Feedback Loop of Assessments to Standards

In all assessment processes, there is a strong feedback loop between the standards and the assessments, as captured in the 12th step of this framework. Standards are written to capture a vision of what students should be able to do. But assessment is where the “rubber really hits the road”—the faculty do not really understand and appreciate how a standard is phrased and framed until it is operationally defined by its corresponding assessment. And in assessing it, they more concretely see the skills in action and can re-evaluate the programmatic vision.

Although this example focuses on a very specific area, this process of revision should be happening more broadly in the field of educational leadership. The ELCC standards are thoughtfully developed and comprehensive, but what do they look like in practice, given the profession’s experience with performance assessment to date? What are individual programs learning in this regard?

Overall, the field of educational leadership is just beginning its journey towards a standards-driven performance assessment-based curriculum. This will be a process of trial-and-error, but it may well lead to stronger programs with significantly higher credibility with the public and the rest of academia.

Since assessment must be aligned with instruction, the use of performance assessments tends to orient instruction towards constructivist activities, where students are highly engaged in constructing their own knowledge.

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3. Changing Assessment, Changing Instruction; Ella Burton

University based school leadership preparation programs are under attack. Accreditation standards, federal mandates, and the standards-based movement are changing instruction and assessment. The changing landscape of leadership preparation requires higher-education programs to engage in complex discussions altering long-standing norms about teaching and learning. The challenge is to maintain a focus on students and their need to be highly skilled, thoughtful practitioners who are able to know and use the knowledge they acquire in their university degree programs.

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Introduction

University based school leadership preparation programs are under attack. Levine (2005) suggested that school leadership preparation programs were in a “race to the bottom” (p. 61). Preparation programs are also being asked to address more explicit accreditation standards and the Secretary of the US Department of Education has suggested applying standards embedded in No Child Left Behind (NCLB) to higher education (The Spellings Report, 2006). This report has an ambitious set of goals as to the expectations for American higher education. There are five goals specific to charting the future of higher education and one of those is very specific in that postsecondary institutions are expected to provide high-quality instruction.

At the heart of nearly every report suggesting change in the preparation of school leaders is a recommendation that programs strengthen the quality of

teaching, gather data about student success while in the program and upon graduation, and adopt common performance assessments that assure that all students meet standards and benchmarks and have a similar educational experience.

Such dramatic changes rarely come without resistance or debate. The standards-based movement represents a major change and as a result has been both vilified and praised. As institutions of higher education tackle the requirements of the standards-based movement there is a need to recognize the vast differences in the professoriate depending on whether emphasis is placed on teaching or engaging in research.

Teaching and Learning in a Standards-Based Environment

The change in the culture of assessment begs inquiry into the pedagogical practices that professors use in the courses they teach. To improve instructional effectiveness it is important to establish a framework that shapes how the program values instruction. An analysis of current practices and a review of related pedagogy support identification of appropriate instructional approaches. These practices must support student acquisition of the knowledge and skills to successfully complete the performance activities. Student success, including the extent they learn and grow intellectually, are the important considerations.

There are prescribed steps used to design performance activities. The process begins with a decision about what standards should be assessed, determining a performance activity, establishing a scoring rubric and establishing a way to assess student work. Strategies for aligning course design and course delivery with both national and state standards, and incorporation of common performance assessments into courses must be developed (see Anderson, Chapter 2).

Student success hinges on the alignment of instruction with assessment. Often this requires modification in instructional design and delivery. According to Marzano et al. (1992) there are dimensions of learning that involve the interaction of five types, or dimensions of thinking, which are loose metaphors for the way the mind works during learning. The five

dimensions of learning include acquisition and integration of knowledge as well as the ability to use knowledge meaningfully. At the heart of the emphasis is performance assessment that measures student acquired knowledge and skill. (see Berry, Chapter 1).

Changing Instruction, Challenging the Professoriate

The changing role of the professoriate starts with a review of the general approach to teaching and learning. The challenge is to develop changes in response to conditions that include greater clarity about the knowledge, skills and dispositions desired of graduates. There is the expectation that teaching become research-based and faculty develop and use common assessments embedded within key courses in degree programs. The latest thinking on how people learn—differing learning styles, multiple intelligences—is changing the nature of teaching in higher education. Students have more options for when, where and how they complete coursework than ever before (Cross, 2005).

Today, students attempt to connect concepts to their own life/work as they look for connections and relationships between text, lecture, and assessments. Students have an increased interest in the quality of their learning and are willing to critique their work on quality standards, as well as new knowledge, skills and dispositions developed as a result of their experience.

In order to address the programmatic needs and the needs of students, faculty must review delivery systems, teaching methods, course materials, curricula, student assessment and other factors. The professoriate must increasingly consider a blended learning platform to accelerate learning with seamless access and delivery of formal, informal and self-paced learning resources across the continuum of learning styles. Degree programs that utilize blended course offerings—those that combine face-to-face instruction with online learning and reduced classroom contact hours have the potential to increase student learning.

The instruction that faculties provide, the intellectual climate that they create, and the policy decisions that they make, should all start with the

question, “But will it improve students’ learning?” (Cross, 2005). What is clear is that students who are actively engaged in learning for deeper understanding through performance activities are likely to learn more—because of this engagement—than students who are not. The evidence is clear that students have to find their own answers by working through their own pathways of knowledge.

Emphasis on student learning requires that faculty know what to look for (through research), to see themselves as life-long learners (self-reflection), and to be much more sensitive to the range of learning styles present in their students (Cross, 2005).

The task facing the professoriate is to move towards accountability by constructing course syllabi with an emphasis around national and state standards. In school leadership that means courses must address the standards of the Leadership Policy Standards (CCSSO, 2008) and Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC, 2002). Common assessments that reflect the knowledge, skill and understanding of the students who have completed identified courses must be developed. Data about student performance on the assessments must be collected and used to guide program improvement. These data can prove informative when evaluating the quality of the teaching and learning experiences of students. Accreditation requirements mean development of assessments, rubrics (scoring guides) and a method of gathering that data that will show evidence those students know their area of study.

As degree programs implement standards and embed performance assessments in the course offerings, faculty face the need to examine their own instructional skills and give consideration to research-based strategies for increasing student achievement. Through the lens of a researcher, teaching must be acknowledged as both a skill and an art. Marzano , Pickering and Pollock (2001) identified nine instructional strategies linked to improved student learning. In *Classroom Instruction that Works: Research-Based Strategies For Increased Student Achievement* the authors provide examples of how to utilize these strategies when considering best teaching practices. Questions about successful teaching led to inquires high quality classroom learning. What works in education? How do we know?

How can teachers find out? How can education research find its way into the classroom? How can we apply research to help the individual student? arise in most programs and instructors do not have time to find the answers. Marzano, Pickering, Pollock (2001) have examined decades of research findings to distill the results into nine broad teaching strategies that have positive effects on student learning. These strategies are:

- Identifying similarities and differences
- Summarizing and note taking
- Reinforcing effort and providing recognition
- Homework and practice
- Nonlinguistic representations
- Cooperative learning
- Generating and testing hypotheses
- Questions, cues, and advance organizers

These strategies are appropriate for all age levels and have positive effects on student learning. None of the identified strategies are new; however Marzano's research provided evidence through a meta-analysis that emphasized how students gain knowledge when these instructional approaches are embedded into the teaching and learning experience. To assure quality instruction and to support expectations for greater accountability, faculty must embed the best research practices into course preparation and delivery. Such an approach affirms the learning experience and includes the knowledge, skills and dispositions that cause students to synthesize learning in a way that adds value to both their careers and personal lives.

Developing the capacity to teach more effectively, to present information and gather data about student learning is becoming the norm in higher education. It is essential that faculty know how and when to best apply effective strategies in the instructional program and to understand that these strategies can be used both in designing original lessons and as interventions when other strategies are less successful.

Understand the Adult Learner

Knowledge about the adult learner is essential. “An understanding of the principles of adult learning is part of being effective” (Lieb, 1991). The knowledge and skill students are expected to learn must be delivered within the frame of adult learning. Professors need to recognize that elements of respect and relevancy provide an environment where adults learn best (Lieb, 1991). There is little chance that academic work will become a part of the lifelong experience for the adult if the “special needs and requirements” (Lieb, 1991) are not part of the teaching and learning process. According to Lieb, there are four critical elements of learning—motivation, reinforcement, retention and transference—that must be addressed to maximize adult learning. Effective instructional practice grounded in knowledge of adult learners often leads to comprehension of a few general principles with a thorough grounding in the application and process to a variety of concrete details. Such an approach helps students to remember how to apply the key principles to immediate circumstances. It is as important to acknowledge that adult learning theory and principles are very operative in higher education. Zemke & Zemke (1984) wrote that the knowledge about adult learning might be divided into three basic divisions: (1) things we know about adult learners and their motivation, (2) things we know about designing a curriculum for adults, (3) and things we know about working with adults in the classroom.

Identifying success competencies needed for professional leadership is also critical. An established set of competencies that identifies the skills of successful leaders in an educational setting is reflected in the work of Eichinger et al. (2003). The Education Competency Wheel is a graphic representation of six factors that, when incorporated into the adult leadership skill set, create a greater opportunity for success in one’s professional career and for becoming an integral member of a work team. Completion of a degree in educational leadership from an accredited university will prepare the student in competencies anchored in the six factors of courage, results, operating skills, strategic skills, individual excellence, and organizational skills.

Blended Learning

Blended Learning is another format that can be used to strengthen instructional effectiveness. The Virtual Professor (Dec, 2004) reports that faculty have experienced positive effects in their classroom instruction when using online teaching strategies. Faculty use technology in numerous ways: Power Point presentations, course web pages, web-based courses and integrating the use of computers into the classroom. The Foundation Coalition, one of eight engineering coalitions funded by the National Science Foundation—an organization committed to improving curricular and instructional effectiveness in higher education—suggests placing the technologies in the hands of students on a routine basis to facilitate learning, change learning outcomes, and reshape the learning process (NSF Coalition, 1993). Reshaping the learning process utilizing non-traditional applications for learning requires large investments of time for developing online learning versions of courses. It requires re-conceptualization of the content and learning objectives.

Creating performance assessments helps students demonstrate their learning and supports the application of that learning to “real-life” situations. Additionally, asking students to reflect on and think about their learning can bring meaning to the content of courses. The following prompts provide examples of ways to promote student reflection.

Knowledge and Understanding: What new knowledge or deeper understandings did you acquire as a result of participating in this class? What can you present as evidence of your learning?

Attitudes and Dispositions: How were your attitudes and dispositions affected by your participation in this class? Where did you undergo the greatest change in orientation or thought? What attitudes and dispositions were affirmed?

Personal Insights: What was the most valuable insight you learned

about yourself as an educational leader through your participation in this class?

Application: What will you do to apply what you learned in this class?

Effort: How much effort did you put into this class and to what degree are you satisfied with your learning?

Prompts for Student Reflection

Framing a Learning Activity

The changing landscape of leadership preparation requires higher-education programs to engage in complex and often contentious conversations. For many problems this means altering long-standing norms that ignored divisions and avoided substantive discussions of challenging issues.

An expectation for accountability is pointing students to apply their learning in “real-life” settings.

Step 1 – Define learning

One of the most critical initial steps at repositioning the teaching and learning process is to agree upon a definition of learning. Although there are many ways of defining learning, the focus is on the person doing the learning. This is a significant shift to a focus on student outcomes (learning) rather than program inputs (faculty, texts, courses). Boyd and others suggest that learning is the act or process by which behavioral change, knowledge, skills and attitudes are acquired (1980, pp. 100-101).

Step 2 – Develop a conceptual framework

Clarity about mission, beliefs, purpose and goals, the knowledge base, performance expectations and performance assessments are essential preconditions to the work on syllabi, curriculum, teaching and learning and assessment. Conceptualizing a researched-based way for faculty to address teaching and learning creates a framework for engaging in action research, analyzing and understanding data about teaching and learning and creation of a data –driven system that improves as a result of the data collected.

In an attempt to assure success in all areas, it is necessary to explore ways that university professors continue to strengthen and enhance their teaching effectiveness. Involving faculty in continuous review processes necessary for capstone courses in the concentration area of the program is one solution. In the updating process, attention is given to real life experiences as a part of the activities and learning experience. Faculty are using higher levels of technology to push the envelope on learning through pod casts, video streaming, online chats, and common assessments following course completion. Putting systems in place for assessing and measuring student learning is the best indicator of the commitment to accountability. The development of a set of common assessments will serve as the catalyst for the professoriate to change the way students experience teaching and learning. Instruction must address the challenge of authentic assessment. Instruction must match expected outcomes and be brought together through a variety of instructional strategies that are intentional, purposeful and deliberate. This is an invitation to abandon what we think we know about teaching and learning and develop a vision for where we are going with program needs as they relate to student learning and acquiring leadership knowledge, skill and disposition.

Step 3 – Work on the Syllabi

Once faculty develop a shared definition of student learning and a common conceptual framework for the program, the work to redesign student learning experiences begins. Most often it begins with the course syllabus. The syllabus communicates how student learning develops and progresses during the course. It also provides clarity about expectations and how student learning will be assessed. The master syllabus may require

continuous revision as best practice changes. Therefore, the syllabus must be explicit about performance activities, the ways they are assessed, and any opportunities for students to revise and resubmit their work.

Step 4 – Align Instructional Strategies

Once a course is constructed there is a need to align instructional strategies and techniques with course goals and embedded performance assessments. Diagnosis of current instructional approaches may be needed. One effective strategy is to set aside time for an instructional diagnosis and to invite students to participate in these sessions. Providing time for conversation among faculty can build connections that strengthen and enhance teaching. Providing time to attend local, regional and national conferences, engaging in research, and utilizing university faculty development centers are avenues that support excellence in teaching. Promoting better thinking using higher order thinking skills is central to the role of higher education. Thus increased awareness that problem-solving skills must be an integral part of the course delivery is important.

Final Thoughts

The challenge to strengthen the preparation of school leaders is central to the school improvement conversation. As a result, school leader preparation programs are faced with increasing demands and mounting pressure to alter the content and structure of their programs.

As conversations proceed they invariably result in confronting long-standing norms about the role and function of higher education, about the freedom of individual faculty to design courses, and about collection and use of data that may reveal trends and patterns among courses and faculty that were never discussed.

The challenge is to maintain a focus on students and their need to be highly skilled, thoughtful practitioners able to both know and use the knowledge they acquire in their programs.

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4. Designing Performance Assessments: A Guide for Faculty; Gary Marx

This chapter outlines a strategy developed by the Educational Leadership faculty at Eastern Michigan University (EMU) for designing performance assessments based on standards for Educational Leadership. The strategy is not intended to suggest a model of best practice. Rather, it is presented as one example of how this work might be done and was written to assist faculty at other institutions confronted with the challenges of developing performance assessments for Educational Leadership curriculum.

Note: This module has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and sanctioned by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of education administration. In addition to publication in the Connexions Content Commons, this module is published in the [International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation](#), Volume 4, Number 4 (October – December 2009). Formatted and edited in Connexions by Theodore Creighton, Virginia Tech.

Introduction

Standards and curriculum are related but they are not the same. The written curriculum for a program describes what is most important to teach and provides specific guidance about the scope and sequence of instruction (Squires, 2005). The basic structure for curriculum in school administrative preparation programs typically consists of a required series of courses organized around a conceptual framework or a set of functional responsibilities associated with the role of principal or superintendent. The theoretical frame or functions guide the distribution of content across the required courses to ensure that students encounter what they need to know and be able to do as they progress through their program of study. The original organizing principles for a program curriculum may be tacit or explicit and determine the scope and sequence of instruction.

Standards specify desired program outcomes but they do not indicate how the standards should be met; the means to outcome achievement is the realm of curriculum. Standards-based reform can be thought of as an attempt to standardize the structural framework used to organize the curriculum, thus influencing the quality of instruction and ultimately improving the quality of practicing school administrators. The goal of standards-based assessment at the program level is to collect data about the performance of participants in the program in relation to the expectations, analyze the results, and use that information for purposes of program development.

University program accreditation agencies such as the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and many state program approval processes currently utilize a standards-based methodology. This chapter provides guidance for

faculty who must respond to the mandated use of performance assessments by accreditation and state program approval agents to document that graduates from their Educational Leadership programs have met some set of standards.

The examples in this chapter use the performance expectations and indicators for educational leaders recently published by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO, 2008) as a referent set of standards to illustrate the process of performance assessment design at the leadership program level. This set was selected because the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC), the Specialized Professional Association for Educational Leadership programs for NCATE, will use CCSSO 2008 performance expectations as a foundation for its seven-year review of program standards and revised ELCC standards are anticipated in 2009. The steps in the assessment design process will be the same regardless of which set of standards or performance expectations faculty are required to use.

The chapter provides specific guidance for completing the six steps in the design phase of quality performance assessment described by Dr. Anderson in Chapter 2. It begins with a description of how to use a two-dimensional matrix to help determine where and how often to assess each standard and provides suggestions for how to address overlapping standards and unequal distribution patterns. The next section presents an example of a performance assessment to illustrate how one develops an assessment activity and identifies the product of assessment. Guidelines for how to develop assessment criteria, write a scoring rubric, and establish evaluation performance standards are then provided. The chapter concludes with a brief overview of the evaluation, implementation and program development phases of performance assessment as they relate to design.

High Quality Performance Assessment: The Design Phase

As discussed in Chapter 2 there are multiple steps in designing a performance activity. The following sections describe the six steps and utilize an example of a performance activity developed at Eastern Michigan University to illustrate the process.

Step 1: Decide Where the Standards Should be Assessed

The first step in the design process is to determine where and how often priority standards will be assessed. It is helpful to start with an examination of how well the curriculum in place is currently aligned with the expected outcomes in the standards document and then make adjustments where necessary. A matrix is a good tool for critically analyzing how particular outcomes are currently distributed across courses in the program and identifying gaps that may exist.

Table 1 uses Performance Expectation 2 from CCSSO 2008 to illustrate the matrix organization. Regardless of the standards document used, it is important that the items included in the matrix utilize the finest grain descriptions available. Each CCSSO 2008 performance expectation is subdivided into elements and each element includes a set of specific indicators of performance. Since the indicators for the various elements represent the smallest units in the set, brief descriptions of each indicator along with a reference code are listed down the left side of the matrix in the example. The various courses included in the program curriculum are then listed in separate columns across the top of the matrix. In this example, Instructional Leadership and School Improvement are hypothetical classes that deal with topics related to the supervision of instruction and school reform respectively. In actual practice, the matrix would include all of the standard elements and all of the courses required by the program of study.

<div><div>Performance Expectation 2: Teaching and Learning</div><div><i>Performance Expectations and Indicators for Education Leaders (CCSSO 2008)</i></div></div>		Curriculum Offerings		
Element A. Strong Professional Culture		Instructional Leadership	School Improvement	Etc.

Indicators				
A - 1	Commitment to high expectations	X		
A - 2	Guides standards-based professional development	X		
A - 3	Models collaboration that improves practices	X		
A - 4	Develops resources to build professional culture	X		
A - 5	Supports staff examination of beliefs & practices	X		
A - 6	Provides ongoing feedback	X		
A - 7	Guides individual professional development plans	X		
Element B. Rigorous Curriculum and Instruction				
Indicators				

B - 1	Develops shared understanding of rigor	X		
B - 2	Guides alignment process	X		
B - 3	Monitors curriculum & instructional system effects	X		
B - 4	Uses research & data-based strategies & practices	X		
Element C. Assessment and Accountability				
Indicators				
C -1	Uses data to improve the quality of teaching & learning	X	X	
C -2	Uses varied sources & kinds of information to guide evaluation		X	
C - 3	Guides regular analyses & disaggregation of data		X	

C - 4	Uses systems to monitor & analyze assessment results		X	
C - 5	Interprets data and communicates progress		X	

Sample Distribution and Alignment Matrix

Next, faculty review course syllabi and indicate which of the elements in the matrix are intended outcomes of instruction in the various courses by placing an “X” in the appropriate cell. The completed matrix is then analyzed to determine patterns of distribution and identify any gaps where certain elements are not being addressed. In the example, there are no gaps for Performance Expectation 2 and only one indicator is taught in both of the two courses listed. The patterns in the sample matrix also show that assessment and accountability in this hypothetical program curriculum are topics addressed apart from curriculum, instruction, and professional development. This mapping process graphically illustrates the distribution of performance indicators across courses and the matrix is a good way to provide accreditation or program reviewers with evidence that the curriculum is aligned with the standards once any required adjustments have been made in response to the initial findings.

During the construction of the alignment and distribution matrix it is likely that some indicators will be listed as intended outcomes in multiple courses. These overlaps occur because standards documents are organized around performance categories and the curriculum for many leadership preparation programs are organized around traditional course offerings, each of which can cover a range of performances. Where performance indicators overlap multiple courses, faculty are faced with a decision regarding whether to use multiple assessments of the same performance or assign each indicator to a unique course and assess the performance only once in the program.

When making a decision regarding the final distribution of indicators, faculty should consider the total assessment burden associated with each course. In programs organized around traditional course offerings, the assessment burden will usually be greater in classes that emphasize the application of knowledge and skills than in classes that focus on the development of theoretical frameworks. This bias toward relevance and practicality is embedded in the standards documents themselves, which emphasize the enactment of leadership.

To illustrate assessment burden, consider a curriculum where courses are organized around the standards categories themselves, such as offering a course called Teaching and Learning that addresses the indicators included in performance expectation 2 as shown above. In this case the assessment burden will be quite large because 16 total indicators must be assessed. When courses in a curriculum are organized by content or functional role, offering one class on instructional leadership and another on school improvement as shown in the example above, the assessment burden is likely to be less but still unequal within courses (12 indicators versus 5 indicators that must be assessed in this example). Although multiple measures enhance assessment validity, faculty should consider the practical aspects of how much time will be required to assess student work, and based on our experience, the time commitment is significant where multiple indicators are involved.

One way to reduce the assessment burden is to redistribute performance indicators or defining certain indicators as secondary outcomes in some of the courses. In the example above, using data to improve the quality of teaching and learning might be assessed as a primary outcome in the School Improvement course based on a rationale that the content emphasizes data and information management. The use of data to inform practice would still remain a content topic in the instructional leadership class but it would not be included in the performance assessment for that class. Once these decisions are made, the matrix should be updated to clearly communicate how overlaps have been addressed. Removing the “X” in the matrix row or coding the indicators that are designated as secondary outcomes would be ways to communicate where each of the indicators will be assessed.

This section briefly outlined a procedural method and provided suggestions for aligning and distributing standards within the leadership preparation program curriculum. The procedure ensures that students have the opportunity to acquire the leadership knowledge and skills associated with a standards document as they complete their academic work. Deciding how each performance indicator will actually be assessed is the focus of steps 2 and 3 in the design process.

Step 2: Determine the Assessment Activity

The primary design challenge for faculty in educational leadership programs involves creating opportunities for authentic performances that allow students who do not serve in formal leadership roles to demonstrate their competence as leaders. The first task is to identify the key performances that are associated with each expectation and the place to start is with a close examination of the standards document and any available supporting material.

CCSSO 2008 provides a narrative description of each performance expectation statement along with a list of elements and performance indicators intended to link the generalized

description of the expectation to the practice of educational leadership. Table 1 above listed the three elements associated with the teaching and learning expectation: (a) strong professional culture; (b) rigorous curriculum and instruction; and, (c) assessment and accountability.

By reviewing the full text of the indicator descriptions listed under each CCSSO 2008 performance expectation anyone familiar with common practices in the field should be able to identify things educational leaders do when they are engaged in these aspects of their work. Simulating the challenges of authentic leadership practice so that students can demonstrate competence is the goal of good performance assessment design. The task is to create a context where students are required to demonstrate the identified leadership activities and behaviors. Once an assessment activity has been identified, the next step is to decide how the performance will be documented so an evaluator can make judgments about quality.

Step 3: Identify the Assessment Object

By definition, performances involve observable behavior so the assessment activity must require students to act in ways that demonstrate competence in meeting the associated standard elements. Ideally, these performances will occur in real school settings so the assignment must also include some mechanism for presenting tangible evidence of the performance that can be reviewed and evaluated by faculty. This can include a wide range of objects or deliverables including such things as journals, videos, portfolios, plans, presentations, podcasts, and so on.

The Field Based Teaching and Learning Project in Table 2 illustrates a performance activity written to address the elements that were assigned to the hypothetical Instructional Leadership course in the alignment matrix shown in Table 1. Thus, the assessment tasks address all of the indicators for professional culture and rigorous curriculum and instruction (elements “a” and “b”), and the “data use” element from assessment and accountability (element “c”). The narrative for the CCSSO 2008 Teaching and Learning Performance Expectation and the complete list of elements and performance indicators can be viewed in the Appendix.

The Field Based Teaching and Learning Project assessment activity is composed of five interrelated assignments in the areas of teaching and learning that require graduate students to apply leadership skills that enable and encourage reflective professional practice on the part of teachers in a school. Each assignment in the example begins with a description of the required performance and concludes with the evidence (object) that must be provided for final evaluation. The elements and indicators from the Teaching and Learning Performance Expectation (CCSSO 2008) that are assessed by the assignment are referenced within the parentheses at the end of each assignment. Notice that the description of the assessment activity uses words taken directly from the CCSSO 2008

document whenever possible, which makes alignment between assessments and standards transparent.

The assignments in the Teaching and Learning Project example use professional collaboration among peers as the context for eliciting the various behaviors. Similar assignments could be designed using the context of a clinical cycle involving a preconference, observation and post conference if the intent of the project was to simulate supervision of instruction. The idea is to find some meaningful and practical way that students can apply their knowledge and skills. In addition to being relevant, the tasks should also be motivating, challenging, and achievable.

When the decision about how to assess a performance indicator is finalized, the focus of design shifts to the evaluation process itself. Steps 4 through 6 illustrate how to develop an assessment rubric, a set of scoring guidelines intended to inform students regarding expectations and serve as the evaluative lens.

Sample Performance Activity/Field Based Teaching and Learning Project

1. Recruit 1-2 peers in the workplace to join you in a learning community and work as a team to complete the assignments in this project. Maintain a reflective journal of your activities that includes a brief description of actions taken, reflections on the leadership behaviors you exhibited, and thoughts about how your leadership actions might be refined or strengthened. (A-3, A-4)
2. Using standards-based accountability data, identify a problem of instructional practice at the classroom level that is related to a broader issue of student learning and performance within a particular content area in the school. Submit a written problem statement that includes a description of the procedures and processes used by the team to identify this as an area of concern and how the problem of practice is situated in the broader school improvement plan. (C-1, A-1)
3. Select a unit of study from the district curriculum for the content area you identified above and conduct two audits: 1) to determine alignment of curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment; and, 2) to determine alignment of the unit outcomes with state content standards and benchmarks. Prepare a written report of your findings and make recommendations for enhancing the unit through the use of technology and research based instructional strategies in ways that fully accommodate learners' diverse needs. (B-1, B-2, B-4)
4. Collaborate with your team to address the problem of practice you identified in your own work setting using observation and feedback strategies and practices to analyze student work, monitor progress, and redesign curriculum and instruction as needed to meet diverse needs. (A-6, A-3, B-1, B-3, B-4)
5. Reflect on your experiences completing this project and evaluate your current level of knowledge and skills as instructional leaders. Use the results of the evaluation to guide development of a professional growth plan for your team that reflects an on-going commitment to continuous improvement of teaching and learning. Prepare a

written summary of the team discussion and an action plan that outlines specific goals and agreed upon expectations for how you will support each other's learning over time. (A-2, A-5, A-7)

Step 4: Define the Assessment Criteria

Rubric design begins with a determination of the criteria that will be used to make judgments about quality. Criteria specify expectations regarding the types of behavior or attributes that should be evident in the performance. For example, prior to the 2006 Winter Olympics figure skating free skate performances were rated based on two criteria: technical merit and presentation.

When writing performance assessments to professional standards documents, the standards themselves specify the major assessment criteria. In the curriculum and instruction element from CCSSO 2008 reprinted in Table 3, the products of performance must include evidence the student developed shared understanding, ensured alignment, monitored effects of curriculum and instruction, and used data-based strategies and research in the process.

CCSSO 2008: Expectation 2, Element B: Rigorous Curriculum and Instruction	
B - 1	Develops shared understanding of rigor
B - 2	Guides alignment process
B - 3	Monitors curriculum & instructional system effects
B - 4	Uses research & data-based strategies & practices

CCSSO Expectations

When criteria are explicit and clear, inter-rater reliability is likely to be higher. As discussed in Chapter 3, clear criteria also inform instruction and guide student learning. However, clarity is usually associated with specificity and writing detailed criteria is labor intensive. For example, consider what would be involved to establish specific criteria for evaluating the degree to which a student developed “a shared understanding of rigorous curriculum and instruction” in a reflective journal. Most departments will likely defer developing criteria statements and in many cases the standards descriptions will become

the de facto set (at least initially). The question that must be addressed by each department is how specific the criteria must be to guide evaluation and contribute to program development. Criteria can be refined as departments study performance results and examine student work in later steps in the process. When criteria have been selected, the next task is to incorporate the criteria as statements in an assessment rubric.

Step 5: Develop the Assessment Rubric

An assessment rubric identifies the characteristics of possible responses along a continuum from exceptional to unacceptable. The rubric can be designed to address each assessment criterion individually or combine a number of criteria for a holistic evaluation. Decisions about individual versus holistic scoring will affect the complexity of the evaluation task. Although a case can be made for individual criterion scoring, our experience disclosed that the behaviors associated with the assessment products we received from students were complex and variable so it made more sense to evaluate how well multiple expectations were integrated in a student's response using a holistic approach. A related decision in rubric design involves how many performance levels you will use for each criterion and what you will name them. Too many categories can make it difficult to describe how one differentiates performance so we recommend starting with three: Exceeds Standards, Meets Standards, and Does Not Meet Standards.

One of the acknowledged purposes for developing performance assessments is to provide evidence to accreditation agencies that students have met the criteria for professional licensure or certification. Among other things, accreditation reviewers will be looking for alignment between the standards expectations and the performance assessments used to judge competence. Incorporating the language of the standards in the rubrics used to evaluate student performance makes the logic of alignment transparent and simplifies accreditation review. However, using the language of the standards often results in generalized descriptions of the evaluation criteria, which is not particularly helpful for students trying to write to the rubric. Providing students with templates and sample responses for each assignment are ways to overcome vague rubrics written to ensure alignment is clear.

Begin writing rubrics with a descriptive statement of the knowledge or skill being assessed (as specified in the assessment criteria) and then adding words and phrases that depict the degree of performance involved at that particular level. In the following example of a rubric written for assignment 1 in the Teaching and Learning Project we decided to incorporate the standards language to ensure a reviewer can clearly identify the elements and indicators that are being assessed. We start by using the basic language of the standard as the statement for Meets Standards and then downgrade and embellish the descriptions for Does Not Meet and Exceeds.

Sample Rubric for Teaching and Learning Project Assignment 1

For the first assignment students had to recruit 1-2 peers to join them in forming a learning community that worked as a team to complete all of the assignments in the project. The assessment product was a reflective journal that included brief descriptions of actions taken, reflections on the leadership behaviors exhibited while forming and facilitating the team, and thoughts about how the student's leadership actions might be refined or strengthened.

The following two indicators from the professional culture element in the Teaching and Learning Performance Expectation (CCSSO 2008) were assessed using this performance:

Assignment 1: Reflective Journal Summary Report Template

- “Models openness to change and collaboration that improves practices and student outcomes” (A-3), and
- “Develops time and resources to build a professional culture of openness and collaboration, engaging teachers in sharing information, analyzing outcomes, and planning improvement” (A-4).

Here is a rubric sample statement for “Meets Standards”:

Works with at least one peer in the workplace to complete the assignments in the project. The reflective journal summary report demonstrates openness to change and the ability to build a professional culture of collaboration that improves practices and student outcomes by engaging teachers in sharing information, analyzing results, and planning improvement.

Note how the statement uses the language of the standard element indicators to establish the descriptive criteria for acceptable performance. Multiple indicators assessed by the same assignment are often related in some way (in this example, collaboration is the organizing theme) so the rubric writer can either integrate the related indicators within one sentence as we did here or write separate sentences for each indicator.

Successfully recruiting and engaging at least one other person in the workplace in activities intended to improve teaching and learning is evidence that the student can actually lead this work and thus, meets the standard. Given that most students would have to accomplish this absent formal authority is challenging for novices so the rubric for unacceptable performance (Does Not Meet Standards) was written to make it possible for people to meet the standard at varying levels. The content of the reflective journal is intended to provide details regarding the leadership processes and practices employed by the student so it should be possible to make a judgment about the existence of a leadership strategy even if participation results are sparse.

A rubric statement example for “Does Not Meet Standards”:

Is unable to recruit anyone to collaborate on completing even some part of an assignment in the project. The activities cited in the reflective journal summary report lack any clear leadership strategy for building a professional culture of collaboration that improves practices and student outcomes.

The final step is to determine criteria for exceptional performance (Exceeds Standards). In our example, the emphasis was placed on the results of the leadership strategy, i.e. greater involvement on the part of people in the workplace and actual experimentation and change on the part of participants.

A rubric statement example for “Exceeds Standards”:

Works with two or more peers in the workplace to complete the assignments in the project. The reflective journal summary report documents the development of a professional culture of collaboration and includes examples of changes in practice that resulted from teachers sharing information, analyzing student outcomes, and planning for improvement.

The use of a common template to organize student responses is strongly recommended. A template not only gives students an outline for presenting their work that aligns with the assessment rubric, it also makes evaluating the work easier for faculty. The template structure standardizes how students respond to the assignment and lets the assessor know where to look for evidence that key components were mastered.

The following example is a template intended to structure the reflective journal that faculty must review to evaluate student performance using the sample rubric developed above.

Assignment 1: Reflective Journal Summary Report Template

1. Introduction and background information: A brief overview of your workplace and pertinent facts related to your efforts to recruit peers to participate in the project. (Basic school demographics, your role, the peer group you targeted, time spent, etc.)
2. Description of the leadership strategy you used to engage others in improving professional practice to increase student learning, and your rationale.
3. Narrative description of what happened. Briefly specify who was involved, the nature of the problem of practice you identified for this project, and what you were able to accomplish.
4. Analysis and interpretation of what happened.

5. Summary of overall meaning. (What is the significance of this experience? What did you learn?)

Step 6: Define the Assessment Standards

This step addresses the program accountability question, “What level of performance is good enough?” The performance assessment and scoring rubric establishes a common frame of reference for professional competence but faculty must determine the knowledge and skill level required for mastery; i.e. when the performance meets expectations. To use Dr. Anderson’s example from Chapter X, this is similar to the decision that a driver’s training instructor must make when assessing a student’s readiness to acquire a license. The standards are transparent and well known but it is up to the instructor to judge when the student knows enough and possess at least the minimal skill level to ensure they will not be a danger to others on the road. In this context, “minimal” is a passing grade, essentially indicating that the student met the standard at an acceptable level and is deemed competent to engage in the practice.

One way to begin this process is to submit the draft performance assessment documents for departmental peer review and discussion. This approach is a good way to get an initial sense of perceived face validity and how well the design elements align with the standards. During these discussions it would be helpful to engage in scenario building to explore what the baseline performance might look like. After field testing and implementation (Steps 7 – 10), continue checking the quality of student work, particularly marginal performances, to test the viability of the “cut point” that is established.

To this point, the chapter described six steps involved in designing performance assessments in relation to a set of professional standards. The process includes identifying key performances, developing activities that elicit the performances, and writing assessment rubrics to guide judgments about the quality of the performances. The next section contains a brief overview of the remaining three phases (6 steps) of high quality assessment outlined by Dr. Anderson viewed from the perspective of performance assessment design.

Evaluation, Implementation, and Program Development Phase

When the design phase is complete, the quality assessment process enters the evaluation phase, which consists of two steps; piloting the performance and using the rubric to evaluate samples of student work.

The goal of piloting is to seek feedback from students and faculty who may not have been directly involved in the design phase prior to implementation of the assessment at the program or department level. What appeared to be crystal clear during the writing process

often turns out to be confusing or cumbersome when one actually tries to follow the directions or use the rubric to assess students' work. Piloting allows tweaking to occur before final implementation. Once a performance assessment is rolled out for use it is good practice to establish a review process that ensures monitoring and adjustment occurs over time.

During piloting actual student work is evaluated for the first time using the rubric that was developed and a content review of rated material presents an opportunity to refine the evaluation assessment standards that were established at the conclusion of the design phase. The process of selecting anchor performances, examples of student work at each level of the rubric, provides insight regarding how the assessment activity, assignment template and rubric are interacting to elicit the performance and guide documentation. Content analysis of anchor documents that meet or exceed standards is one way to ensure that the assessment is valid.

The evaluation phase ensures that the components of the assessment design are coherent, understandable, and differentiate performances as expected. Evaluation provides opportunity for quality control before going to scale. During the implementation phase that follows, faculty assessors are trained using the anchor performances to increase inter-rater reliability and the performance assessment becomes a program requirement for all students.

Program development is the final phase in the high quality assessment process. Among other things, this involves a close examination of achievement results to see if there might be evidence of unintended bias related to how the assessment was designed and written. Analysis of student outcomes and interpretation of the patterns of performance that emerge engage faculty in dialogue about the interrelationships among curriculum, instruction and assessment. These conversations inform the re-design phase as the next cycle of high quality assessment begins.

Conclusion

This chapter described high quality assessment practices associated with the design of performance assessments based on standards for Educational Leadership. Based on our experience at EMU, the process is involved and time-consuming but we have found that the payoff regarding program development is worth it in the end.

Some professors of educational leadership will engage in this work because they value performance assessment and believe it is the right thing to do. Others will do it because it is mandated by accreditation agencies or institutional policy. Regardless of the motivation for one's engagement, we firmly believe the work should be of high quality. This overview of one strategy for designing performance assessment is an attempt to point us in that direction.

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Appendix

Note: Excerpt from: Performance expectations and indicators for education leaders: An ISLLC-based guide to implementing leader standards and a common guide to the educational leadership policy standards.

Performance Expectation 2: Teaching and Learning

Education leaders ensure achievement and success of all students by monitoring and continuously improving teaching and learning.

Dispositions exemplified in Expectation 2:

Education leaders believe in, value, and are committed to

- Learning as the fundamental purpose of school
- Diversity as an asset
- Continuous professional growth and development
- Lifelong learning
- Collaboration with all stakeholders
- High expectations for all
- Student learning

Narrative

A strong, positive, professional culture fosters learning by all educators and students. In a strong professional culture, leaders share and distribute responsibilities to provide quality, effectiveness, and coherence across all components of the instructional system (such as curriculum, instructional materials, pedagogy, and student assessment). Leaders are responsible for a professional culture in which learning opportunities are targeted to the vision and goals and differentiated appropriately to meet the needs of every student. Leaders need knowledge, skills, and beliefs that provide equitable differentiation of instruction and curriculum materials to be effective with a range of student characteristics, needs, and achievement.

A strong professional culture includes reflection, timely and specific feedback that improves practice, and support for continuous improvement toward vision and goals for student learning. Educators plan their own professional learning strategically, building their own capacities on the job. Leaders engage in continuous inquiry about effectiveness of curricular and instructional practices and work collaboratively to make appropriate changes that improve results.

Element A: Strong Professional Culture

A strong professional culture supports teacher learning and shared commitments to the vision and goals.

Indicators: A leader...

1. Develop shared understanding, capacities, and commitment to high expectations for all students and closing achievement gaps.
2. Guides and supports job-embedded, standards-based professional development that improves teaching and learning and meets diverse learning needs of every student.
3. Models openness to change and collaboration that improves practices and student outcomes.
4. Develops time and resources to build a professional culture of openness and collaboration, engaging teachers in sharing information, analyzing outcomes, and planning improvement.
5. Provides support, time, and resources for leaders and staff to examine their own beliefs, values, and practices in relation to the vision and goals for teaching and learning.
6. Provides ongoing feedback using data, assessments, and evaluation methods that improve practice.
7. Guides and monitors individual professional development plans and progress for continuous improvement of teaching and learning.

Element B: Rigorous Curriculum and Instruction

Improving achievement of all students requires all educators to know and use rigorous curriculum and effective instructional practices, individualized for success of every

student.

Indicators: A leader...

1. Develops shared understanding of rigorous curriculum and standards-based instructional programs, working with teams to analyze student work, monitor student progress, and redesign curricular and instructional programs to meet diverse needs.
2. Provides coherent, effective guidance of rigorous curriculum and instruction, aligning content standards, curriculum, teaching, assessments, professional development, assessments, and evaluation methods.
3. Provides and monitors effects of differentiated teaching strategies, curricular materials, educational technologies, and other resources appropriate to address diverse student populations, including students with disabilities, cultural and linguistic differences, gifted and talented, disadvantaged social economic backgrounds, or other factors affecting learning.
4. Identifies and uses high-quality research and data-based strategies and practices that are appropriate in the local context to increase learning for every student.

Element C: Assessment and Accountability

Improving achievement and closing achievement gaps require that leaders make appropriate, sound use of assessments, performance management, and accountability strategies to achieve vision, mission, and goals.

Indicators: A leader...

1. Develops and appropriately uses aligned, standards-based accountability data to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
2. Uses varied sources and kinds of information and assessments (such as test scores, work samples, and teacher judgment) to evaluate student learning, effective teaching, and program quality.
3. Guides regular analyses and disaggregation of data about all students to improve instructional programs.
4. Uses effective data-based technologies and performance management systems to monitor and analyze assessment results for accountability reporting and to guide continuous improvement.
5. Interprets data and communicates progress toward vision, mission, and goals for education, the school community, and other stakeholders.

Source: Sanders, N. M., & Kearney, K. M. (Eds.). (2008). *Performance expectations and indicators for education leaders: An ISLLC-based guide to implementing leader standards and a companion guide to the educational leadership policy standards: ISLLC 2008*. Washington, DC: State Consortium on Education Leadership, Council of Chief State School Officers (pp. 16-18).